



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

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IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE: **WM-9**  
**A1305**

November 22, 2004

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Donald L. Wolfe  
Interim Director of Public Works

### **BOARD MOTION DATED OCTOBER 19, 2004, SYNOPSIS 4 "AN OCEAN BLUEPRINT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY"**

Your Board's motion dated October 19, 2004 (copy attached), instructed the Directors of Health Services and Beaches and Harbors and the Interim Director of Public Works to review the subject report and to provide a summary of the final report and the potential impact of the proposed policy on the County of Los Angeles.

Public Works has reviewed the subject report prepared by the United States Commission on Ocean Policy. The following is a summary of the 500-page report which discusses its potential impact on the County with respect to Public Works issues. Health Services and Beaches and Harbors will be providing their reviews separately.

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Attach.

cc: Chief Administrative Office  
Executive Office  
Department of Beaches and Harbors  
Department of Health Services

## Summary

The Commission finds that the nation's oceans and coastal waters are degraded and in danger of further degradation. Major changes are urgently needed in the manner in which they are managed. To foster this change, the Commission makes over 200 recommendations in the report, most of which are directed at Congress, the executive branch leadership, and Federal agencies. The intent of these changes is to protect and enhance the marine and estuarine environments along the coasts of the United States. With respect to Public Works issues, the Commission makes broad recommendations in the following areas:

- ❑ Coastal watersheds management
- ❑ Protection against natural hazards
- ❑ Sediment and contaminated sediment
- ❑ Septic systems
- ❑ Invasive species management
- ❑ NPDES enforcement
- ❑ Nonpoint sources and stormwater runoff

To cover the cost of the report's recommendations, the creation of an Ocean Policy Trust Fund in the U.S. Treasury is proposed, funded by fees generated from permitted activities in federal waters.

## Potential Impact to the County

The Commission's report may potentially result in better protection of our coastal resources through increased coordination between Federal, State, and local government. The recommendations promote better coordination between environmental regulatory agencies which could reduce conflicting and/or duplicative requirements. Taking a watershed management approach allows better focus on the complexity and variability of pollution control strategies for nonpoint sources and urban runoff. The report does point out that a watershed management approach often is difficult to implement since agency jurisdictional boundaries are not the same as watershed boundaries. We are experiencing this fact in our current watershed management efforts as well as the difficulty in funding and developing partnerships which cross jurisdictional boundaries. The efforts in the near future will require creative funding strategies and governance. Formation of joint powers authorities to assist in the governance of watersheds is effective but requires resources and funding.

As a major urban coastal county, the County of Los Angeles can expect to be affected in many public works-related areas by the Commission's recommendations. To what extent and the nature of the effect is much harder to assess since the recommendations would need to be articulated through the various environmental permits and California Environmental Quality Act process. If the County is not proactively involved, the results of the recommendations can result in more stringent permit requirements and associated cost of implementation that may not result in attainment of the protection of coastal waters.

We envision that our current efforts and associated expenditures to comply with the Santa Monica Bay Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), Ballona Creek Trash TMDL, and issues concerning private sanitary septic disposal requirements will be typical for the other emerging TMDLs impacting the coast. There will be more water quality monitoring required to assess pollution impacts to aquatic life and sediments as well as human health effects. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Permit will become more watershed based in its structure, which is positive, and requirements more specific towards pollutants of concern. Securing Department of Public Works infrastructure construction and/or maintenance permits that impact coastal waters will require better planning and scheduling to meet commitments and deadlines.

Generally, we can expect more guidance and support from the Federal government in areas such as coastal watersheds management, natural hazards mitigation, septic systems zoning and permitting, water quality monitoring, and others. Refining the National Flood Insurance Program and Natural Hazards Mitigation Program can provide better protection of the County's water, road, and flood control infrastructure and our services to the communities. More stringent enforcement of water quality regulations and NPDES permits and TMDLs can be expected, as well as modifications to the Clean Water Act, Coastal Zone Act, and other Federal and State laws. The County should lobby at State and Federal levels to ensure adequate funding is provided for the regulated agencies to implement new State or Federal mandates. The State and Federal Environmental agencies need adequate funding to conduct good science in the development of mandates and conducting economic assessments on the impact of such mandates to ensure practical regulations that are defensible to the public.

The Commission estimates the cost to implement its 200-plus recommendations at \$3.8 billion annually. It is uncertain how much of that cost will be borne by local government, nor whether the potential benefits justify that cost.

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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Director of Health Services  
Director of Beaches and Harbors  
Interim Director of Public Works

At its meeting held October 19, 2004, the Board took the following action:

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Supervisor Knabe made the following statement:

"In Summer 2001, the United States Commission on Ocean Policy was formed pursuant to the Oceans Act of 2000. The goal of the Commission is to develop a report for a new National ocean policy through coordination with the United States, a scientific advisory panel, and the public. On April 20, 2004, the Commission released the Preliminary Report of the United States Commission on Ocean Policy, which presented almost 200 recommendations for reform.

"On September 20, 2004, the Commission submitted its final report, 'An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century' to the President and Congress. The Commission put forward 212 recommendations for a new coordinated and comprehensive National ocean policy.

"Under the Ocean Act of 2000, the President has ninety (90) days to submit his statement of proposals to implement or respond to the Commission's findings and recommendations to Congress."

(Continued on Page 2)

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Therefore, on motion of Supervisor Knabe, seconded by Supervisor Burke, unanimously carried (Supervisors Molina and Antonovich being absent), the Directors of Health Services, Beaches and Harbors and the Interim Director of Public Works were instructed to review the final report prepared by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, "An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century" (available for viewing on <http://www.oceancommission.gov>) and to provide the Board, by November 23, 2004, a summary of the final report and the potential impacts of the proposed policy on Los Angeles County.

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Copies distributed:

Each Supervisor  
Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel